

Whitehead C, Mason R, Eckersley S, Lloyd K.

[Place, Identity and Migration and European Museums.](#)

In: Whitehead, C; Lloyd, K; Eckersley, S; Mason, R, ed. *Museums, Migration and Identity in Europe*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015, pp.7-60

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This is an Accepted Manuscript of a book chapter published by Routledge in *Place, Identity and Migration and European Museums* on 1/5/2015, available online:

<https://www.routledge.com/products/isbn/9781472425188>.

DOI link to article:

<https://www.routledge.com/products/isbn/9781472425188>

Date deposited:

27/07/2016

Embargo release date:

01 November 2016



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Museums, Migration and Identity in Europe

ISBN 978-1-4724-2518-8

Final chapter post-print

NB: Page numbers and formatting do not match actual publication

Chapter 1

Place, Identity and Migration and European Museums

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Introduction

One major contention of this book and of the research that we have undertaken for the MeLa project is that *place* is a fundamental epistemological structure and referent within museums. This initial chapter draws on our research into European museum representations of place as well as providing an initial sense of some of the qualitative research into staff and visitor perspectives. The chapter is in three parts. We will offer some theoretical resources for understanding place within museums: (1) as a force within identity work; (2) as something inextricably connected with temporality; and (3) as an entity made manifest in material objects in museums. We also discuss the scales of place representations, from global to local and ‘multi-geographical’, involving a discussion of the nature of historical representation in museums and the significance of place for the construction of history more generally. This corresponds loosely to the thematic structuring of our research in clusters, including ‘Placing the Nation’, ‘European Cities and their Others’ and ‘Peoples, Borders, Movements’, articulating different ways of representing place and place identities in museums. Finally, we make suggestions for rethinking contemporary museum practice, with particular regard to issues around migration and its discursive configuration relative to ideas such as multiculturalism, exchange, solidarity and belonging.

We hope that this will offer some suggestions for strategies to reposition *place* within the museum as an organizational force. Through this force, migration and related issues such as ideas of belonging, disadvantage and prejudice can be presented as historicized phenomena that involve antagonisms to be faced in the present. At the same time, the repositioning of place means that the inevitable political agency of the museum can be both problematized and reflexively mobilized to engage with socio-political debates, tensions and possibilities. We acknowledge that place has already been used as an organizing theme for exhibitions in some museum genres (e.g. city or neighbourhood museums and migration museums) and in some

countries with a well-recognized history of migration like Australia. However, we believe that there is scope to extend this theme to different kinds of museums and to museums operating in the European context and that a more thorough reflection on its representational potential can stimulate museum strategies that address and intervene constructively in social realities.

Part 1. Place, Time, Identity

Museum collections are drawn together from specific places (sometimes plural, and sometimes outwith and far from the geographical location of the museum). Displays represent places explicitly or implicitly: from the morphological and environmental interests of museums of natural history; the colonizing and differencing impulse of the early ethnographic museum; the territorial surveying of the archaeological museum (often based on where – in which places – objects in the collection were found); and the geographies of the history museum, where places are often recognized not as mere backdrops to events but rather as inextricably bound up with them. Even the public art museum, which may be seen as an attempt to present materials (art works) as transcending the places of their origin and use, has nearly always mobilized place as a primary means of classification and as an explanation for differences between and evolutionary trajectories within bodies of material (the travels of artists and their influence upon others). More direct examples could be mentioned, such as: the open-air folk museum, where places are reconstructed, physically re-membered or invented; the city museum; the ecomuseum, where the place and the museum are inseparable, although such places may calcify or assume a mythical or fictional aspect as a result of their museumification; and the migration museum, charting people's journeys from, through and to places. At the extreme end of the representational spectrum we locate the so-called 'universal museum' that purports to represent the world (in its historical-relational complexity) *to* the world, thereby, according to some (e.g. O'Neill 2004) justifying its international holdings and seeking escape from the moral, financial and practical binds associated with wholesale repatriation claims.

Place, in short, is an organizing force in museums and provides the sense or focus (or both) of museum representations. However, where human history is concerned we need to think of place not as an isolated force or referent. Rather, it is so bound up with human existence that

it forms a historicized place–people–culture *complex* in the sense developed by Sharon Macdonald (although the complex that interests her is ‘memory–heritage–identity’), where a ‘complex’ consists of ‘non-exhaustive patterned combinations and relationships’ and complexes themselves gain autonomous meanings, effects and possibilities for ‘going on’ (2013: 5). It is the representations of this complex in different political contexts with which we are concerned, most particularly because this complex has the capacity to do some work in relation to identities: to be brought to bear upon them, and to implicate, perpetuate and construct them. This identity work¹ occurs in two ways.

Firstly, museum representations may confer identity characteristics upon the inhabitants of places: Macdonald, for example, identifies how the Museum of Skye uses objects of local production to testify to local resourcefulness and independence from the ‘outside’ (2013: 155); while the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh commissioned ‘One Nation, Five Million Voices’ in 2008 for its permanent gallery *Scotland: A Changing Nation*. This is a ‘talking heads’ film of Scots and other inhabitants of Scotland discussing Scottish character traits: hospitable, tolerant, welcoming, friendly, down-to-earth, gregarious, hard-working, truthful, ‘rough (in a good way)’, community-oriented and so on. The film is complex: it is both a representation of people’s impressions, beliefs and experiences pertaining to identity and at the same time a means of orchestrating individual voices into an institutional conferral of identity. While most of the traits mentioned are complementary and thus tending to a shared or unitary place identity, some contradictory traits are offered – the Scots are presented by some as ‘dour’ and ‘pessimistic’, and by another as ‘the happiest people you’ll ever meet’, pointing

¹ Our use of the term ‘identity work’ here focuses on the way in which institutions ‘work’ on and with identity and is thus distinct from that of Rounds (2006), who uses the term to refer to the way in which visitors may use museums to ‘try out’ alternative worldviews in acts of identity-as-exploration. He suggests that this form of identity work is pleasurable but ultimately ‘low risk’. Consequently, Rounds’ ‘identity work’ is unlikely to result in transformative experiences that radically alter an individual’s sense of self.

to the discrepant nature of such generalizations and allowing for the destabilization of identities – a theme to which we will return towards the end of this chapter.

It is rare in museum and heritage representations to encounter explicit explanations for how such shared character traits came to be and how they are connected to place, although we see in the example of the Museum of Skye that an isolated place may be connected to people's resourcefulness and independent spirit, just as the need to subsist in a rugged landscape may be connected to the hardiness of its inhabitants; Trinca, for example, discusses the 'recurring nationalist impulse to contrive a stoic bush type as classically Australian' (2007: 99). But the precise logics of place identities – for example the ways in which place might determine identity – are often unclear. Are place identities seen as innate, singular to 'natives' and unshareable with others, thus enabling ideologies with racial and potentially racist underpinnings? Or are they seen to be culturally transmitted and learned, so that non-autochthonous² ethnic groups can share common traits? Do they derive from the communal experience of living and surviving in place? Perhaps in reality there is often slippage between these positions both in museum representations and in people's beliefs, and place identity can be both strongly conferred or felt *and* poorly articulated. In any case, museum conferrals of identity function as interpellation – do we, as visitors, belong to (identify with) a suggested identity? Are our credentials 'in place'? Or are we asked to identify (but not to identify with) a discrete geographically-defined group – for example, the Scots, the islanders, etc. – from outside, and to learn about and to appreciate

² We recognize the ambiguity of the term 'autochthonous' but suggest, along with Rebecca Ehata, that it can be usefully understood in relation to discourse: 'The concepts of indigeneity and autochthony do ... appear to have the same content. What differentiates the two, however, is their application and current discursive usage. Indigeneity is generally used to describe groups which, having been marginalised and dispossessed in their own lands, are pursuing a discourse based on claims for inclusion to reclaim some recognition of their status and rights, as is the case for example with the Aborigines in Australia or Canada's First Nations. In contrast, discourses of autochthony are largely advanced by dominant groups who fear that they may become marginalised in the future and are pursuing a discourse of exclusion in order to protect their dominant status' (2013: 49–50).

(or in some cases and at some times, such as in early museums that supported colonial projects and cast colonized peoples as inferior or degenerate, to deplore) their salient characteristics?

Secondly, visitors to museums may encounter representations and reminders of places that have been or are part of their own personal histories, bringing into play affective responses, such as feelings of belonging or non-belonging, interrelated with memory work such as remembering, reminiscing or indeed seeking to forget. In this sense, as part of the theoretical premises of our research we previously proposed a definition of *place identity* as:

The construction of identity for or by people(s) through reference to place and/or the construction of identity for places through reference to their morphology, histories, cultures and inhabitants. (Whitehead et al. 2012: 14)

This definition is an attempt to acknowledge the identity work that is undertaken by ‘official’ institutional representations, for example in museums, TV, tourist literature, etc., alongside and sometimes in relation to identities that individuals and groups may construct, perform and experience for themselves. It is important to consider that institutional conferrals of place identity and people’s experiences, feelings and statements of identity often inform one another, but that there is also scope for significant mismatch between them. While such mismatch is partly a consequence of the liabilities involved in ‘speaking for’ multiple and heterogeneous communities through institutional representation, it can also be a consequence of representational violence incurred by cultural prejudice, be it conscious or unconscious. For example we may consider the omission in some city museums of reference to neighbourhoods with significant populations of migrant descent or minority groups. At the same time, political factors may come into play, such as the desire to erase the cultural memories associated with specific places that might perpetuate dissent, discomfort or encourage the exercise of ideologies that are no longer accepted by dominant groups. Consider for example the long-standing absence of memorialization of the *Führerbunker* beneath Wilhelmstraße in Berlin (Macdonald 2009: 4) – a sharp contrast to the spectacular and celebratory museumization of another bunker – the Churchill War Rooms in London. The desire to understand the relationship between

institutional representation and people's experience has fuelled the visitor studies undertaken as part of our work, which will be presented in a future publication.

To be clear, our definition of place-identity does not involve final definitions or deconstructions of the component nouns – place and identity. In a previous MeLa* publication we took place, in a broadly social constructionist view that we will qualify in this chapter, to signify 'the cultural entity constructed and reconstructed through human social representation', that is, 'what emerges when particular spaces are imbued with significance through human actions such as identifying, naming, surveying, mapping, bordering, conquering, ruling, representing, celebrating them etc.' (Whitehead et al. 2012: 13). In relation to 'identity', we need an open concept in part because the need to negotiate competing conceptualizations within a unitary definition would produce something too cumbersome to be of use 'in the field'. But it is also because a less-than-specific definition like this allows for the capture of a wide range of understandings and constructions and is attentive to the very multi-valency and currency of the term itself. As some have pointed out, 'identity' is still used in much academic writing but very often without coherent definition or qualified use, leading to critique and both negative and positive problematizations – that is, do we abandon the concept or seek to refine it? (Jones and Krzyżanowski 2008: 38–9). For example, Anthias argues that by rejecting the analytical concept of identity in favour of 'belonging' and 'focusing on location/dislocation and on positionality ... it is possible to problematize the epistemological and ontological status of identity and critique the forms of politics based upon these more effectively, while still treating identity as a *socially* meaningful concept' (2002: 494; original emphasis). However, it is precisely because the term 'identity' has been naturalized and has become part of vernacular expression beyond the academy – it is 'socially meaningful' – that we find it to be useful. In this sense, we have attempted to keep the definition of identity open. This is all the more pressing because of affective dimensions that evade classificatory rigour, as in Hedetoft's suggestion that identity inevitably involves attachments that involve 'irrationality, emotionality, sentiment and unselfish dedication' (Hedetoft 2002: 8).

At the same time we find compelling accounts of belonging as a way of rethinking identity. Jones and Krzyżanowski attempt to ‘unpack’ identity ‘into a theory of belonging’, attentive to ‘affinities and attachments that shape the way we perceive ourselves’ and inclusionary and exclusionary forces both internal, such as elective choice, and external, such as citizenship law (2008: 43–4), and productive of a necessarily circular definition:

Identity’ refers to the ways in which people link their complex range of belonging into an ‘ideal type’ situation, in which the multiple differences are incorporated into a collective identity, which can be seen as a proxy of infinitely complicated belongings. We conceptualize identity as a way in which individuals explain their complex belonging in a way that is understandable to others. (2008: 50)

While this is suggestive for understandings of the relationships between identity, belongings and the social, its emphasis on deliberative self-representation to others – similar in some ways to representational, declarative and performative theories of self and identity or (e.g. Goffman 1959; Waterman 1992) – forecloses attention to less formalized experiences of identity. A differently oriented account is developed by Montserrat Guibernau, who explores the dynamics between individual and group identities and posits that identity is ‘constructed both through belonging and through exclusion – as a choice or as imposed by others – and, in both cases, it involves various degrees of emotional attachment to a range of communities and groups’ (2013: 2). In these instances ‘belonging’ is connected primarily to human social relations, although Guibernau’s spatial metaphors hint at the potential for relationality between group belonging and place:

Belonging fosters an emotional attachment; it prompts the expansion of the individual’s personality to embrace the attitudes of the group, to be loyal and obedient to it. In return, the group offers a ‘home’, a familiar space – physical, virtual or imagined – where individuals share common interests, values, or a project. Belonging provides them with an environment in which they matter. (2013: 27)

When we think of ourselves as ‘belonging’ somewhere, a human social dimension may be involved, for we may think of ourselves as part of a group that belongs in that place, with its

particular history. Or we may feel more rooted and essentialized belongings, such as our sense of being physically adapted to a certain environment, or a predilection for a certain kind of landscape. We may feel belongings to multiple places, either because of personal migrations or cosmopolitan attitudes. If we identify as allochthons we may feel that we *come* to belong somewhere through willing adoption of local and/or civic ideals and practices, or through having major life experiences there. But belonging in place like this can be both elective and exclusionary: we may elect to belong, but this may contrast with competing ideas about who belongs and who does not, and indeed different groups may feel belongings to the same place with entirely contrasting affective and political orientations, leading to antagonisms.

What these ideas about belonging suggest is a way of articulating identities in connection to group relations and how people give meaning to their lives. We are interested in the way in which place might or should be inscribed into the complex of belongings that articulate identity and how ‘sources’ for attachment such as represented places or experiences-in-place might figure (cf. Hedetoft 2002: 2; Whitehead et al. 2012: 19). At the same time, given our interests in place, we also attend to the situational and relational contingency of identities (Jenkins 1996; see also Chapter 6 in this volume on the way in which visitors may shift identification with place in order to accept or reject plural representations of the nation). We also find convincing Macdonald’s (2009: 118–19) argument that we should attempt to move beyond scalar ontologies of place identity, such as the ‘local nesting inside the global’ and instead attend to the way in which categories of place identity such as local, global and transnational are ‘assembled’ by museums, that is, how these categories and divisions between places are produced, sustained and indeed disrupted within museum representations.

Our definition of place identity forms a basis for a number of other conceptualizations of particular importance for museum work, and indeed for heritage and historiography in general. These are the concepts of ‘identity place’, ‘identity objects’ (both introduced in Whitehead et al. 2012: 14–15) and, as developed by Whitehead and Bozoğlu in Chapter 10 of this volume, geo-temporal ‘constitution moments’. Before addressing these concepts, we must

discuss the particular geographical bind of the museum, as both place and map, or, in other words, as a place of imaginative encounters with geographies beyond itself.

Museum as Place and Map

The museum itself is a place to be visited and traversed, to be explored, navigated and travelled through. Its peculiarity both as a form of representation and as a site of experience is its indexing of place or places normally outside of its own walls – what Macdonald calls the ‘special, concentrated place-flagging space of the museum’ (2013: 155). This is a practice made particularly explicit through the use of two-dimensional maps in museums, and, increasingly, maps and images of places on the floor, making it clear to visitors that they are indeed moving through two places at once (Figures 1.1 and 1.2). How then can we understand and analyse this space? Cultural cartography has emerged as one of a number of approaches to the understanding of signification in museum representations, particularly in relation to collecting and display. A product of the ‘spatial turn’ in humanities and social sciences research, this approach works against the textual approaches underpinned by structuralist understandings which can be literal in their terms (for example, identifying a ‘grammar’ or ‘syntax’ of display). Conversely, cartographical approaches to museum representations recognize the museum itself as a (potentially) vast, three-dimensional multimedia map – a map which is much more complex than a conventional plane-surface map but which at the same time shares many of its politics, technologies (selecting, bounding, scaling, labelling, etc.) and its commitment to representing knowledge spatially. The museum as map has a complex production, often involving multiple institutional-historical layerings and folds, and it is capable of representing ‘real’ (although inevitably constructed) geographies (e.g. landmasses, continents, countries) as well as, and in relation with, conceptual and epistemological geographies (of knowledges, histories, identities, etc.). Here, we focus on the mapping of ‘real’ geopolitical places and peoples such as countries, cities and even entities like the European Union, and the people who inhabit them, count themselves as ‘native’ of, or who immigrate to, emigrate from or pass through, them. This involves concerns relating to the mapping of identities and the movement of people and peoples in the world. So how are places mapped as significant in cultural representations such as

museum display? To understand this, we turn to a series of key concepts that relate experience, time and materiality to place.

[Insert Figure 1.1 here – portrait]

Figure 1.1 Amsterdam Museum interior

Source: Photograph by Whitehead, courtesy of Amsterdam Museum.

[Insert Figure 1.2 here – landscape]

Figure 1.2 Kultur- und Stadthistorisches Museum Duisberg interior

Source: Photograph by Whitehead, courtesy of Kultur- und Stadthistorisches Museum Duisberg.

Identity Places

Through musealization, or ‘fixation’ as heritage site (Kockel 2010: 124), place is formed into embodied historiography and material for identity construction. Certain sites are set up by institutional and representational practice as *places for/of identification* (‘identity places’ for short), i.e. as invitations to visitors to construct their own identities in relation to a politically-framed, geographically-located past. These may include: first parliaments (for example in Ankara); battlefields in which one ‘people’ resists incursion by another (Vienna in 1683, Bannockburn in 1314); past and present borders and boundaries (Berlin, Görlitz); sites of genocide, war crime and atrocity; or merely of exodus, arrival and dwelling (Amsterdam’s Bijlmer housing estate, or the NDSM Barracks occupied by guestworkers); sites of liberation; and so on. Any site is a potential ‘heritage’ site, but social processes render sites important to specific groups, and in particular the representation of sites in and through state-recognized and state-funded museums and ‘heritage’ organizations (such as English Heritage in the UK or UNESCO) effectively authorize a site as heritage, presenting it as significant for the population at large.

In 1983 the gerontological psychologist Graham Rowles published ‘Place and Personal Identity in Old Age: Observations from Appalachia’. In this paper, he described his experiences of researching older inhabitants of Appalachia, with whom he had spent considerable time in order to understand the significance of place within their personal psychologies and social

relations. Some of the time he spent with his research subjects involved driving around the physical spaces of the urban areas which were home to them, and from this practice Rowles was able to recognize the importance for his research subjects of key sites which were salient within their memories: an *incident place* could be the site of the birth of a child, a past romantic encounter with a then-future partner, a sometime dwelling place, and so on. These incident places retained their power for individuals even after drastic physical transformation, for example in the case of a former farmhouse and long-standing family home, since demolished and replaced by someone else's mobile home. A sense of 'insideness', or persistent physical, social and psychological/autobiographical affinities with place, may embrace 'a plethora of "incident places" spanning the space/time trajectory of the individual's entire lifespan':

It may involve not only spatially displaced settings but also proximate locations remembered as they existed at different points in the individual's life. Individual locations may become imbued with a temporal depth of meaning. For example, the same location may be remembered as a wooded lot where a person stole her first kiss, a grocery store built some time later where she worked for several years and as an abandoned fire-gutted building in the present. In sum, we may think of each individual as placed at the vortex of an array of 'incident places' selected from the reservoir of locations that make up the totality of the individual's life history. (Rowles 1983: 304–5)

The incident place is where something of importance happened (or 'took place'), at some point in time. The adapted concept of the *identity* place can also involve this sense of the incident or event (potentially even a long one), but involves an extra dimension relating to explicit identity work. In other words, it is a place that is more or less *explicitly and consciously used by individuals and/or groups as a resource for the maintenance or construction of identity, and/or is a place set up, offered or imposed as a resource of this kind through 'from-above' representations such as in museums or in the designation of places as heritage sites.*

Identity places are not necessarily 'positive' or psychologically accommodating resources: they may relate to experiences of belonging, attachment to place, personal history within place or indeed to non-belonging and exclusion from place in relation to identity in the

present. And as with Rowles' conceptualization of the incident place, the 'temporal depth of meaning' may comprehend tension and contradiction and a layering of significances. One of Rowles' key observations was that place could be simultaneously a site for belonging in the remembered past and for exclusion in the present, based on generational dynamics, demographic factors and so on, leading some older people to mythologize the place-in-the-past, for example by remembering it as less run-down than at present, even where documentary evidence suggested otherwise. In a different way, places in which the marginalization, suppression, oppression or systematic extermination of groups was organized in the past (colonial metropolises, sites of racism and genocide, etc.) may nevertheless signify somewhat positively *in the present* for members of those groups (or their descendants) today, notwithstanding or perhaps sometimes because of historical consciousness of iniquity. For example, in our visitor research at the Amsterdam Museum one respondent with an African migrant background identified strongly as Dutch, perhaps more Dutch, as she put it, than native Netherlands, because the Dutch Golden Era was built on a history of slavery which was her family's heritage. Her ancestors had 'paid with blood, sweat and tears' for Amsterdam; as she put it, 'The Golden Age was built on my history and I have paid heavily for the freedom of this land'. The participant showed, in this way, how she had appropriated as her own (in quite a literal sense) the place that she also associated with the subjugation and enslavement of her ancestors (see also Figure 8.13 in this volume).

We suggest that comparable complexities shape the many affective relations between people and identity places. This also points to the capacity of the identity place to refer to events well before our own lifetimes, as with histories of transatlantic slavery, or the repulsion of invaders from the East at the gates of Vienna in 1683, still cited by modern-day politicians keen to limit EU enlargement (Chapter 10, this volume). We may speculate that one reason for the attention to aged survivors of significant events is geographical in orientation – they were 'there', in place, in the moment when that place came to signify (see also Smith 2006: 77); and they represent a vital connection and temporal connector with identity places that enables subsequent generations to intensify identity work through vicarious experience.

Rowles' valuable contribution to the understanding of the significance of place within the personal and psychological realm is, in the notion of the identity place, translated into the realm of the social and the institutional. As discussed earlier, these two realms are clearly interconnected in complex ways. Institutional representations of places may furnish content for people's identity construction acts. Also, a particular place may have such salience in the minds of community members to prompt museum staff to represent it responsively. By the same token, it is possible to suggest that there may be identity places represented in museums which do *not* have particular salience within the lives and memories of community members, and which represent a political and historical imposition on their identities. (Of course, museums cannot represent all places so as to attend to all possible place identities, but it is precisely in the need to select places for representation that political choice comes into play.) Likewise, places of particular importance to specific groups and communities may go completely unrecognized in the sphere of authorized heritage and museum action. Political and practical explanations for such representational dynamics are to be found in the local contexts in which the museums and communities are embedded, and in each context of interest a key intellectual project is the identification and examination of such dynamics in order to illuminate from different directions the politics of place–people–culture relations. A blunt example: in contexts where regimes are seen as tending towards totalitarianism, political imperatives may preclude the representation of certain places, such as sites of protest against the state, while the representation of others are seen as expedient ways to create homogenized, unitary identities. While perhaps less pronounced, such dynamics also prevail in 'liberal' democracies: consider for example the entirely unmemorialized occupation in 2010–11 by illegal immigrants of the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration in Paris, in protest against state management of immigration and immigrants (Labadi 2013). In short we may ask: what are the interrelationships between institutional conferrals and representations of identity and people's own place identities? Why do these interrelationships obtain? What do they mean for questions of citizenship, belonging, tolerance, solidarity, etc.?

One of the limitations of social and psychological sciences' approaches to place identity has been an exclusive focus on *individual* human experience (that is, how individuals or groups of individuals construct their identity through reference to place) rather than on the ways in which 'from-above' institutional representations (such as museum displays, TV documentaries, etc.) construct identity *for* places through reference to their morphology, histories, cultures and inhabitants. Museums and heritage sites provide a physical catalogue of identity objects and identity places, with which visitors can negotiate personal identities and feelings of belonging that are at once contemporary but also in dialectical relations with notions and accounts of the past. Many theoretical resources associated with place identity can be adapted in illuminating ways. For example, as discussed above, Rowles' concept of 'incident places' refers to locations which individuals identify, in hindsight, as having been sites of the experience of critical or defining moments in their personal histories. The concept is here abstracted to account for the 'identity places' represented in museum displays as defining moments within the history of a territory, nation, religion or people. A particularly strong example is to be found in the Museum for the Falklands, the very site of which is presented as an identity place on the museum website:

Holdfast Road, where the Museum is located, is also historically significant – it was here, on 14th June 1982, that Major General Sir Jeremy Moore ordered the British land forces to 'Hold Fast' until he negotiated the surrender of the Argentine forces. (Museum for the Falklands 2013)

Identity places are potentially infinite in type and we do not propose a classification or taxonomy here. However, a brief list of some types of identity place may serve to suggest possibilities, although in the process of constructing any such list it may be immediately noted that overlaps and multiple valences can obtain:

- dwelling places
- workplaces
- sites of crime, iniquity, resistance and protest
- sites of transit

- sites of economic importance (mineral deposits, rivers)
- sites of geographical significance (defensible sites, ports, etc.)
- sites of battle and conflict
- sites of cultural expression
- sites of subversive action
- sites of state and civic power
- sites of leisure
- sites of deportation
- hiding places
- ghettos
- sites of emigrant departure
- sites of immigrant arrival.

Museums have numerous means to represent places outside their own walls, such as photographs, film footage, oral histories, maps and other graphic representations. Alongside these, accessioned physical objects too can be presented as concretizations of place or, to be more precise, of human engagement with place. The particular symbolic investiture involved in such presentation is discussed next.

Identity Objects

These are produced through the indelible association of an object – usually tangible and material – with place. Objects assume use value because of the specific conditions of place and can be mobilized within museum contexts to stand for particular affective relationships with and experiences of place. Some examples of identity objects include:

- objects made or used in response to specific environmental, social and working conditions (clothing, tools, etc.);
- objects produced from local resources, such as mineralogical ones, as part of local industrial production (e.g. cutlery in Sheffield, UK);

- objects that may have been used in crucial and/or emotive historical moments, such as the communist-era instruments of interrogation, torture and execution at Terror Haza in Budapest;
- objects that belonged to victims of genocide, as at the Jewish Museum in Berlin;
- objects brought by refugees and other migrants as vestiges of the past and of past places;
- objects taken as loot from repulsed invaders, as in the ‘Turkish Loot’ at the Museum of Vienna;
- objects bespeaking transcultural exchange, as in a growing number of museum representations that counter a view of world history as one of discrete developments of culture in favour of one that shows interconnectedness, encounters and multidirectional influence;
- ‘hybrid’ objects which are made to stand as emblematic celebrations of contemporary multiculturalism in Western Europe (cf. Macdonald 2013: 126; Chapter 10, this volume).

Perhaps one of the most committed explorations of place through the display of identity objects that we have encountered can be found in the Neukölln Museum in Berlin. This comprises 99 objects belonging to current or sometime inhabitants of Neukölln, taken as starting points for explorations of stories of *people's* belonging which are then contextualized using ICT resources in relation to global phenomena and movements. One of these objects is a *zurna* – a wind instrument associated with celebrations in Kurdish regions. It was brought by an unnamed family (‘Family I’) to Germany as they fled the violence between the Turkish army and the Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan (Kurdistan Workers Party: PKK). The father (Mehmet) is quoted at length:

We are repressed and have no rights. There is torture and you cannot move freely. I had to flee with my family to save us. There were Turkish soldiers who put on clothing of Guerrillas and just shot people. Then they took the bodies to the Syrian border and claimed the people had tried to leave the

country illegally. They burned the bodies there ... Turkish soldiers mine the squares and streets in the villages. Lethal mines which explode when a car drives over them. On the TV they say it was terrorists ... in Kurdistan there are two fronts and you are forced to choose sides (to support either the PKK or the Turkish state). I couldn't do that ... you would have to fight against your brother or your friend; it's not possible to stay at home and say that you don't support either side. You are forced to decide. I had to find a way out of this conflict. (Translated from German by the authors)

It is further explained that the family took only a few objects with them, along with their memories of home and their worries (Mehmet worried about whether his brother, a PKK fighter, might be shot). The family moved between five different hostels over two years, and disappeared without trace in 1992. The remainder of the display explores the broader topics of Kurdistan and Kurds in Exile. The cultural mapping here works on different levels: mapping an object (the *zurna*) within cultures and forced migration, and therefore within practices of memory and loss; mapping the physical journey of a family; mapping personal experience within world events and world history; and mapping difference and suffering within a physical place, for this object is not hierarchically distinguished from others which convey more settled, 'indigenous' forms of belonging and existence in Neukölln.

The use of the identity object is particularly common in relation to migrant stories, and we will discuss this in relation to a display in the Amsterdam Museum that typifies this in Part 2 of this chapter.

Constitution Moments

As stated above, this is a concept developed by Whitehead and Bozoğlu in Chapter 10 of this volume. In constitution moments, 'historicized identities are constituted in museum representations in relation to "moments" of greater or lesser duration selected as being somehow pivotal for and emblematic of those identities'. Their examples relate to Turkish identities (both as Self and Other) as represented in history museums in Turkey and Western Europe and include moments of conquest, such as the Ottoman capture of Constantinople in 1453, the repulsion of invaders, such as the defeat of the Ottomans at the Siege of Vienna in

1683, and the creation of a nation state upon the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923. These are representative of common constitution moments, which include: purges; civil unrest; killings (including those presented as ‘genocides’ or denied as being such); the foundation, expansion and break-up of geopolitical units (countries, regions, etc.); moments of loss, crisis and recovery; moments of response to Others, moments of constitutional change; moments of suppression and authoritarian rule; of independence; and of denying or being denied the agency for self-determination. Many others are possible.

A key component of such moments is their symbolic durability and capacity to connect situated historical events to contemporary places and identity work. In this sense the constitution moment can and should often be closely related to the identity place, for the event and the place imbue one another with significance, as in the example above of Holdfast Road in the Falklands. Place in this sense may be territory fought for or ceded for strategic reasons, or land from which one is expelled or flees, or in which one flourishes, suffers or is killed because of cultural, economic and political circumstances that it is never possible to separate or abstract from geography and its hold on human desire (desire for dominion, safety, wealth and self-determination). In no sense is place an arbitrary arena for action, nor is an event ever ontologically separable from its place of occurrence. Meanwhile, the constitution moment is not always a matter of pride, and its significance may be contested. For example, a compilation of 147 visitor comments on display at the *London, Sugar, Slavery* exhibition at the Museum of Docklands in London show that, for some, Britain’s involvement in the slave trade is a source of profound shame, while others refuse to dwell on the long history of the trade itself or to feel shame about it, and focus rather on the abolitionist movement as a signifier of British egalitarianism. In any case, a characteristic of constitution moments are their power, presumed or real, to provoke affective responses pertaining to *historicized* belonging. Such moments are seen to define, in some way, particular groups and also to account for the groups’ characteristics, even if this may lead to a certain kind of creative stereotyping (where, for example, the constitution moment of the Blitz is related to British resilience or the expansion of the American frontier to pioneer spirit, and so on). In such relations we can consider that

expressions of place identity are in some way always expressions of a compounded ‘place–time identity’.

In Part 2 of this chapter we consider how museum representations articulate this place–time compound, addressing the construction of the geographical space of history: where history is seen to happen. Or, in other words, how history is ‘placed’ in the triple sense of the locations with which historical events are associated (where they ‘take place’); the way in which geography and geopolitical factors determine historical events; and the representational acts involved in identifying, sizing and to an extent inevitably constructing and reconstructing, historical place on different scales, from the global dimension to the city neighbourhood.

Part 2. Scales of Place: Geographies in Museum Representations

How is place ‘scaled’, bordered and delimited in discourse and acts of constitution both symbolic and legal? What scales of place are identified as significant within the historical and political organization of human existence and experience? In this part we take different views of place representations in museums and briefly explore their historiographical and political ramifications and problems. Where possible we bring to bear perspectives from our case study research organized around the thematic clusters: ‘Nations’, ‘Cities and Others’ and ‘Peoples, Borders, Movements’, although the qualitative research undertaken here (i.e. semi-structured interviews with museum staff and focus groups and observed visits with participants) will be the subject of our next publication. For thorough typological exploration of the different museum types implicated we refer readers to the multivolume MeLa publication *Museums in the 21st Century: Setting the Framework* (Peressut et al. 2013).

Global Place

A key concern here is the extent to which historical events are seen to be radically situated not solely within specific localities but rather within global circumstances, for example in relation to human mobility, commerce, cultural exchange and war and conquest over time, and with a view to the idea that borders are for the most part morphologically arbitrary, and historically even natural borders have largely been crossable. This is a historiographical view that presupposes connectivity between locales and a complex geo-temporal order of confluent

factors, leading to sequences or matrices of inextricably related events, productions and phenomena that are global in reach. It is a perspective inspired by the ‘global turn’ in historiography that gained purchase from the early 2000s (Bayly 2003; Mazlish and Iriye 2005; Hopkins 2006; Rosenberg 2012). It has been adopted in some museums, for example in the Ashmolean Museum’s *Crossing Cultures, Crossing Time* galleries that aim to stress ‘cultural connections and influences rather than pointing out cultural differences’, based on the ‘simple idea that cultures interact and influence one another’ (Brown 2010: 23–4):

Such interaction comes in many forms, whether through the adoption and adaptation of religions, the transfer of ideas and technologies, the creation of new trading routes or the migration of people. (Brown 2010: 24)

Emblematic of such connections is a second or third century AD sculpture of the Buddha produced in Gandhara (now western Pakistan) which, while ‘distinctly Indian’, is also reminiscent of Graeco-Roman statuary and demonstrates the persistent influence of classical civilization introduced ‘nearly five hundred years earlier as Greek culture followed the military expeditions of Alexander the Great’. The rationale is explained thus:

Traditional museum thinking would place this statue firmly in the ‘Oriental’ section near objects from China and Japan, which would fail to convey the strong cultural connections between the West and the Indian subcontinent during antiquity. Could the *Crossing Cultures, Crossing Time* approach deliver a means of displaying the sculpture to reveal its classical heritage as well as its relation to contemporary and later Indian art? It can and it does, with a sequence of linked galleries exhibiting Greek, Ghandaran [and] Indian figures of gods and humans. (Brown 2010: 24)

The museum achieves this (geo-)historiography through partial attempts to decentralize conventional geopolitical markers (‘the Orient’, the ‘Middle East’, ‘Europe’, countries or nation states, etc.) by emphasizing connections via the juxtaposition of objects from different cultures, the organization of vistas and sightlines, cross-cultural thematic displays (e.g. ‘The Human Image’, ‘Money’ and ‘Reading & Writing’), and the use of graphics and touchscreens in ‘Connect’ displays. These latter highlight objects that ‘link different people, cultures and places around the world’, and here the critical aspect is that objects are always repositories or

indexes, and inevitably emblems, of contact and exchange. At the same time, if taken to its logical extremes, the global complexity that this historiographical perspective entails – the sheer multiplicity of temporal and geographical connections – would be too challenging to represent holistically (as it stands it is represented through emblematic objects and narratives of connection), so some conventional geopolitical and chronological markers remain, for example ‘Rome 400BC-AD300’, ‘Japan’, ‘European Prehistory’, ‘England 400–1600’ and so on. This suggests that notwithstanding the impulse towards a global history that avoids a myopic focus on the local there is a persistent need for recognizable place–time structures to construct order within the infinite possible complexity of history, not least so as to avoid an apparently chaotic museum display.

There have been other examples of this intercultural approach in museums that seek to root their representations within some geopolitical unit, for example in the 2012 temporary exhibition *Europe Meets the World* at the National Museum of Denmark, where curators asked the question: ‘What can our collections tell us about the relationship between Europe and the rest of the world through time?’ (Christensen et al. 2012: 12). In another example, the Musée des civilisations de l’Europe e de la Méditerranée in Marseille (MuCEM), opened in 2013, adopts the vast and heterogeneous cultural territory of the Mediterranean Sea (and as a corollary the territories that it ‘connects’) in order to transcend the very notion of the local from which it proceeds:

The aim is to reflect the ‘world culture’ that characterises the Mediterranean in order to extend this beyond its geographical confines: the blend of Latin culture and Christianity extends to the Americas; the Muslim world unfolds from the Saharan tip of Africa to the borders of Indonesia, through the Middle East; Jewish culture has spread to all continents, and the Orthodox world, starting with Greece and South Slavic Europe, has penetrated as far as Siberia. (MuCEM 2013)

Because this kind of museum historiography maps connections and similarities, influences and exchanges, it is also has the capacity to prioritize commonalities over differences and shared heritages and experiences over distinctly local or ‘national’ ones. From the political viewpoint

of the instrumental use of cultural representations, this can be an attractive capacity in a propositional sense. This is because it can involve a politico-discursive inflection of place, intended to construct a particular type of ethical terrain and to potentialize new place identities and belongings relating to intercultural connection as opposed to division. In other words, such museum historiography can constitute or bolster an act of willing new (but broadly liberal), idealized social relations, values and behaviours into place. Part of MuCEM's mission, for example, is to foster:

a new way of seeing the Mediterranean as a place of openness and sharing, reflecting on a common history, understanding the dialogue of civilisations, explaining the challenges involved, applying these to contemporary phenomena, and shaping a new public space. (MuCEM 2013)

In addition to such moral constructions geographical ones also have their dangers. A further inevitable problem of attempts to take a global perspective from 'places' such as the Mediterranean Sea or Europe is the very contingency of such places. To be sure, landmasses and bodies of water have an ante-social physical existence. But, as Ivakhiv puts it, 'any physical place, to the extent that it has been turned into a humanly meaningful social space, is a "cultural construct" and a site of competing discourses' (2003: 11). However, place cannot be understood as simply a human construct in that, from a post-humanist perspective, its morphology can be understood to have agency. So to understand place requires the 'theorization of interactions between human social groups and nonhuman agents or environments' (2003: 12). For example, geographical location is an important nonhuman aspect of the construction of place, but its importance derives from the social value which is attributed to it, as when locations are prized because of their strategic position for commerce, defence or conquest. Nevertheless, as constructs which are at least partly social and therefore historical, the contingency of place comes to the fore. For example, at MuCEM there is an attempt to communicate the idea that the Mediterranean is a 'social construct based on geographical fact' (Chavalier, pers. comm., 2014).

Meanwhile, the concept of ‘Europe’ has signified differently over time (see Stråth 2008: 31–5). As Whitehead and Bozoğlu discuss in Chapter 10, one origin of the concept was the papal exhortations to mobilize against the common enemy of the Ottoman Turks after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453. Indeed Europe (not to mention the EU) cannot be considered a ‘natural’ collection of territories, nor one with natural or clear limits: consider the ambiguous eastern border of Europe, or the vicinity of Sicily and south-western Spain to Africa; places can also expand and contract (like Hungary contracted after the Treaty of Trianon) or fragment (like Yugoslavia). Beginning with particular localities as a starting point to explore global connections inevitably brings into view the artificial nature of places (artificial in the older sense that they are partially created through *human* artifice) as historical constructs resulting from the political division of territory for the purposes of gaining advantages such as access to resources or control of strategic locations (cf. Massey 1994).

On the one hand such awareness may have an emancipatory value in enabling inclusive, cosmopolitan identities and values – senses of global belongings. As one of our focus group participants put it during a discussion about how to define ‘Europe’, ‘lots of people feel like cosmopolitan world-citizens, as if the whole world is mine, really mine, be it Africa, Europe, North-, South-America; wherever I go, I am at home and I grow my family’. But it also brings with it the possibility of crises of rootlessness – a destabilization of place identity – while also calling into question the historical ontologies of geopolitical units, such as nation states or the EU, which exist as legal and social realities, territories of inclusion and exclusion and funders of museums. We turn now to the nation as, in some ways, a more conventional object of museum attention and representation, and one that may seem more limited in range. But as will be seen in our key example of the National Museum of Scotland, articulations of the nation can also be at least partially made up of connections with the wider world.

National Place

Another way of scaling place commonly found in museums is to frame museum representations according to the nation state, potentially both as homeland and actor within foreign environments such as colonies. Indeed, most nation states today consider a national museum to

be an essential part of expressing their statehood and evidencing their claim for recognition both internal and external. The historical development of European national museums has been explored in the Eunamus project (Aronsson and Elgenius 2011), discussed in our previous publication (Whitehead et al. 2012) and explored in Mason (2007) so we will not deal with that here. Instead our focus has been on the ways in which national museums imagine the nation for both insiders and outsiders and how it is part of the process of constructing those positions of inside and outside. Specifically, in relation to the issues of migration and globalization we are concerned with the extent to which museums present the relations between people–place–culture as multiple and heterogeneous or otherwise.

National museums take different forms in various European contexts according to the ways in which expressions of public national culture have been organized and institutionalized over time. They vary according to many factors such as the discourses of nationalism in operation at different times, the legacies of individual collectors, the existence or absence of a culture of patronage, the development of the museum profession, and the relationships between cities, regional states and nation state infrastructure. In some contexts, to be a national museum means to receive national funding or to house collections considered to be of national significance. Some countries do not have a single institution which claims to represent the nation wholesale and instead represent subject-specific elements (e.g. a national coal-mining museum) or regional cultures. For our purposes we have restricted ourselves to those museums which do aim to represent the nation and its histories as a whole and which do so in a narrative fashion. In other words, museums like the Museum of Scotland or the Museum of the History of Catalonia or the German Historical Museum which all set out to tell the ‘story’ of the given nation from beginning to the present day with specific reference to significant periods and events in the nation’s metanarrative. The Museum of the History of Catalonia is a good example, being organized into the following sections:

- The history of Catalonia
- The roots

- The birth of a nation
- Our sea
- On the edge of the Empire
- A steam-powered nation
- The electric years
- Rout and renewal. (Museum of the History of Catalonia, 2007)

In our observations we note that a common feature of contemporary European national museums is that they typically take the current status of the nation state as it exists territorially today and project it backwards as the organizing frame for displays and historical collections which exceed the nation state's contemporary political borders. This is particularly common in displays of geological collections about the beginnings of the nation as a territory. Here we find that maps of contemporary political entities are frequently projected backwards through history with the effect that they appear almost outside of time. In one respect this is an entirely logical approach which serves to orient visitors and demarcate one nation state's museum from another. One may ask how could it be otherwise. However, the issue is whether the representations of the nation which follow are open or closed in orientation. There is a risk that national museums can primarily convey the message that 'we were always in the process of becoming who we are today' (what Donald Preziosi, drawing on Lacan, describes as the use of future anterior in museums (2003: 40)). Over-emphasis on a settled, completed account of the nation as opposed to one which emphasizes change and adaptation as the constant story potentially has implications for public perceptions of the possibility of current and future change.

There is also a risk that national museums tend to domesticate diversity into unity within the national frame and underplay the potential for revealing the interconnectedness and exchange of cultures which cut across boundaries and borders. It does not have to be the case. At the time of our visit, the German Historical Museum in Berlin, for example, made use of a large map in its entrance atrium to precisely draw attention to how its borders have shifted

throughout history. Given that the history of nations is usually that of incorporation and/or resistance between different ethnic and cultural groups, the potential for representing the ongoing nature of global flows, contestation and exchange is present in national museums in great abundance. In our observations, we note that this tends to be brought to the fore explicitly in displays dealing with more contemporary history and politics. In displays about twentieth and twenty-first century history it is common to see themes of migration and multiculturalism. However, we contend that there is scope to connect such themes more overtly across disciplinary boundaries and across the breadth of historical collections so that visitors are encouraged to be aware of how people–place–culture relations have been variously configured through time (Mason 2013). Museums in nations where the political conception of the nation has undergone significant changes or with a well-established history of migration offer particularly rich opportunities for exploring the fluid and changing nature of national identities (for example, in Australia, see Trinca (2007: 96–9)).

As well as illustrating diversity within the nation itself, national museums may utilize their collections in order to facilitate an understanding of the interconnected relationship between that nation and the wider world. Through highlighting the origins of collections, national museums can illustrate the long-standing cultural links between peoples across the globe, although this may well require confronting ethical questions about how certain collections were acquired. For European museums, a globally situated approach to telling national history means not only recognizing the impact that European trade, colonial expansion and emigration had on other cultures, but representing the changes experienced in European nations as a result of these cultural exchanges.

Our case study, the National Museum of Scotland (NMS), for example, aims to tell the story of Scotland's influence on the world and the world on Scotland. Acknowledging Scotland's colonial links and the provenance of the collections, the museum's international strategy focuses on knowledge exchange and the development of cross-cultural understanding. Curatorial staff have established links with external partners (for example in India and Malawi) in order to undertake research about particular objects. Similarly, staff involved in community

engagement have worked with individuals from migrant backgrounds in Scotland to reinterpret existing collections through drawing on their own experiences of objects in their country of origin, although assumptions about people's links and attachments to 'countries of origin' can prove problematic.

One of the particular challenges for national museums is how to steer a course between being responsive to the political context and retaining a sense of distance from contemporary political agendas. NMS staff to whom we spoke stressed that national museums should not be platforms for the political agendas of whichever government was in power. In the current context of Scotland this was, at the time of writing, particularly pressing because of the then-forthcoming referendum on Scottish independence on 18 September 2014.³ Staff discussed the difficulties of representing the nation within the context of current debates on constitutional change. They stressed the importance of representing a broad range of political views in order to maintain professional objectivity and integrity and many were uncomfortable with the idea of taking overt positions or actively promoting 'inclusive' values in their professional roles, even if they agreed with such values on a personal level. However, they felt that museums were an important resource for debates on national identity and actively encouraged visitors to use the museum collections in this way. For example, in 2013 the museum hosted an event for 16–18-year-old Scottish school pupils to explore and debate the future of Scotland, which included discussions of the independence referendum and subsequent issues of citizenship, identity and belonging.

[Insert Figure 1.3 here – landscape]

Figure 1.3 National Museum of Scotland, Scotland: *A Changing Nation*, emigration display

Source: Photograph by Whitehead, courtesy of National Museum of Scotland.

³ In the event the 'No' Campaign against independence prevailed with 55.3% of the vote, set within an 85% turnout.

Staff involved in both curatorial and community engagement work at NMS stressed that the principles of engendering tolerance between peoples were inherent in all aspects of museum work, although this was not necessarily expressed in instrumental policy aims. While staff felt that national museums should not assert a particular definition of national identity, but rather be sites where visitors can form their own identities, they hoped that visitors would understand the plural and multicultural nature of the nation. Staff felt that themes of place, identity and migration were implicit in the museum's collections and stressed the importance of highlighting these stories within the interpretative approaches of the displays, which focus particularly on the themes of Empire and Diaspora (Figure 1.3). The displays not only tell the story of Scotland's role in the British Empire and the experiences of Scottish emigrant communities such as Canada and Australia, but also highlight a much longer history of population movement to and from Scotland. While the dominant narrative in the later galleries focuses on outward population movement, stories of migration as an inherent part of Scottish history can be found throughout the displays. In the Early People gallery, themes of movement and intercultural exchange are made explicit in the interpretation:

Early Peoples

First Moves

All of Scotland's inhabitants have been immigrants or the descendants of immigrants. The first people to settle in Scotland came here nearly ten thousand years ago, travelling from neighbouring areas by land and sea. Since then, people have been moving into, out of and around the country, taking objects from place to place, spreading ideas.

This theme is continued throughout the displays focusing on Scotland's relationship with the world:

Scotland and the World

Shifting Peoples

The dispersal of Scots to far-flung places is only one aspect of Scottish migration. There was also a long tradition of movement within the country itself, and of people coming to Scotland from other lands.

Industry and agriculture attracted men and women to leave their homes and seek work. In the 18th and 19th centuries Clydeside in particular absorbed huge numbers of Highlanders and Lowlanders to work in mills, mines, factories and shipyards.

Irish labourers came to work on the land and in the mines, and to build the canals and railways. Later, immigrants came from other parts of Europe, often fleeing persecution or hard times in their own countries.

Such interpretative strategies fit with Mason's argument that national museums have the potential to reframe and reinterpret historic national collections in order to contextualise societal changes brought about by contemporary globalization:

Given their heterogeneity, national museums ... have the potential to demonstrate the contingent and constructed nature of contemporary nations, *if* they are reframed and reinterpreted through a reflexive and cosmopolitan perspective and *if* the visitor is inclined, enable and encouraged to 'read for' such an account. (2013: 41; original emphases)

However, our research with visitors at the National Museum of Scotland – including those with migrant backgrounds – identified some challenges for realizing this potential. Some focus group participants felt that it was important for museums to concentrate attention on key events in Scotland's history, such as the Wars of Independence with England, rather than attempt to represent the nation in its contemporary plurality. Consequently, these visitors felt that the stories of migrant communities were not significant enough to be included in the museum and struggled to understand why the museum might wish to represent 'new' migrant groups within the historical narrative of the museum, a finding that points to wider issues regarding visitor perceptions of museums as places that address the 'past', rather than responding to changes in contemporary society. These findings are also pertinent given existing research undertaken by the MeLa's sister project Eunamus, which found that visitors from migrant backgrounds felt that the National Museum of Scotland needed to do more to represent the contribution of migrants to the nation (Dodd et al. 2012: 216). While such stories can be found throughout the displays, the findings from both this study and our own research highlight the question of how museums can encourage visitors to read for these subtle accounts, which are often ignored,

forgotten or overlooked, while more ‘explicit’ depictions of migration may be rejected by visitors as ‘over-the-top’ or ‘politically correct’ (see Chapter 6 in this volume). We turn now to the city as geopolitical unit: ostensibly smaller in scale than the nation but also a locus of transnational connections and, crucially, the predominant space of lived experience.

Civic Place

Civic place, usually represented in city museums and, less frequently, in museums dedicated to a particular locality or neighbourhood within a city, offers a particularly localized arena for identity work that can have high stakes socially and politically. The majority of us live in cities and engage with the social relations represented or not represented in museums on a daily basis. The city in this sense is a space of cohabitation but also of potential conflict and competing ways of life. It can be a locus of tensions and frustrations relating to migrant influxes, to people’s inability to integrate into the host culture or the host culture’s inflexibility; or it can be a place where diversity is celebrated for the cultural richness it brings, presented by some as improving quality of life. Polyvocal representations in city museums relating to migrant identity often suggest that cities form places of identification with greater purchase than nation states on people with migrant backgrounds, for whom national symbols (flags, national football teams, monarchies, etc.) may mean very little. An example of this can be found in the Copenhagen Museum’s *Becoming a Copenhagener* display where a video traces the story of one young man of mixed Arab and Danish descent who struggles to find a coherent place identity in relation to ideas of Denmark or Danishness or to Arab culture, before finding a resolution in a ‘Copenhagener’ identity (see Chapter 5 in this volume for a discussion of the curatorial intentions behind this display). Our visitor research supports this sense that people with a migrant background have greater attachment to cities than to nations, while also suggesting that the particular neighbourhood in which people live can be yet more significant for identities. At the same time, city museums can struggle to present anything other than a homogenous city identity, and this can feel less than completely accurate to inhabitants attuned to fine-grained political, social, cultural and economic differences and distinctions between different neighbourhoods.

City museums may involve an attempt to account for multiculturalism and/or ethnic diversity historically. In the case of metropolitan cities with colonial legacies (i.e. cities from which colonial projects were organized, such as Amsterdam and London) this involves facing the colonial past, involving a retrospective moral judgement on the inhabitants of cities in the past (e.g. those who benefited from the slave trade). Meanwhile, the historical treatment of other groups, such as economic migrants like guestworkers, can be a source of ‘uncomfortable’ representation. While staff at some city museums (e.g. the Amsterdam Museum, the Museum of London (de Wildt, pers. comm., 2013; Ross, pers. comm., 2013)) are careful not to shy away from difficult histories, there is a competing pressure relating to the need to ensure that the experience of visiting the museum is generally a positive and uplifting one; that it is suitable for families and children, and that tourists are not presented with an overwhelmingly negative view of city history (Spies, pers. comm., 2013). At the same time, city museums are often funded by civic authorities, and this too may regulate the representations made within them. Nevertheless, key staff at the city museums we surveyed tended towards an idea of the museum as a social activist (cf. Lohman 2013/2006) with elective responsibilities not merely to ‘reflect’ the city (which may in any case be argued away as a fallacy of essentialism) but to shape it and to shape the views of its inhabitants and administrators (i.e. the political class), for example by making statements about the benefits of migration and diversity to civic society and culture. This may run a number of risks. The first is that it can elicit oppositional views, in particular from Far Right groups to which museums and indeed other public media are often unwilling to ‘give platform’. An example of this is the incidence of leafleting by the Far Right group the British National Party at the Museum of London’s *Galleries of Modern London*, where the leaflets presented a negative view of the impact on British society of immigration countering the positive view presented by the museum (Chapter 2, this volume). A second risk is that city museums’ positive representations of diversity belie actual contemporary social realities of disadvantage, prejudice, racism and the cultural isolation and segregation of some groups.

City museums that aim to represent diversity inevitably have to field the obligation to be representative of a large number of groups, including minority communities of all kinds (i.e.

not just those who identify along ethnic or migrant lines). As evident from Cathy Ross' discussion of the Museum of London in Chapter 2 in this volume, this is an unachievable task as well as one that suggests a divisive act of weighing up the political, historical and cultural value of groups over one another. Multicultural society inevitably comes to be represented through samples of diversity, working emblematically rather than thoroughly. We will now turn to one of our case study museums – the Amsterdam Museum – in order to exemplify some of the ways in which place and migration are represented in the museum.

The Amsterdam Museum contains a number of displays that relate strongly to migration. For example, there are displays relating to the Turkish guestworker community (analysed by Whitehead and Bozoğlu in Chapter 10 of this volume) and to the Bijlmer housing development and the ethnic and cultural diversity of its inhabitants. Close by is a carousel-style display explicitly dedicated to migrant experiences (Figure 1.6), and we will discuss this at length below.

[Insert Figure 1.4 here – landscape]

Figure 1.4 *Amsterdam DNA*, Amsterdam Museum

Source: Photograph by Whitehead, courtesy of Amsterdam Museum.

The key display at the Amsterdam Museum is *Amsterdam DNA* (Figure 1.4), a large introductory set of galleries opened in 2011, covering broad historical ground from the foundation of Amsterdam as a settlement to contemporary issues, such as the drug trade and drug use, same-sex marriage and immigration and cultural diversity. The display is designed to form an introduction both to the rest of the museum, and to Amsterdam, especially for those who are pressed for time (such as tourists on short breaks) who will not make it through the rest of the museum. A continuous red wall provides context to relatively few objects, with graphics pertaining to key world events (e.g. the collapse of the Berlin Wall), statistics (e.g. percentage of people from other cultures living in Amsterdam) and mappings (e.g. of trade routes and traded goods, including slaves). Alongside these elements are short films representing time periods in relation to key themes (e.g. '1550–1600: Revolt Against King and

Church'; '1600–1700: Centre of the World', '1945 – Capital of Freedom'). At the same time the display is organized around '4 Values of DNA': 'Spirit of Enterprise'; 'Civic Virtue'; 'Creativity'; and 'Freedom of Thought'. Spirit of Enterprise, for example, is characterized as follows:

Ever since the first settlement at the river Amstel was founded, Amsterdam has been a strategic hub for commerce due to the nearby agriculture, fishery and possibilities for transportation.

This spirit of enterprise peaks in the Golden Age, when Amsterdam becomes a key centre for world trade and finance, but unfortunately these are also the years of slavery and exploitation.

Today, Amsterdam retains its reputation for dynamic commercial enterprise.

The display involves a kind of matrix of these 'strands', recognizing, for example, that Jewish 'freedom of thought' was tolerated (partially – Jews enjoyed fewer rights) because it was advantageous to trade. Notable within the display – as alluded to in the second paragraph of the text – is the attention to difficult histories such as Amsterdam's involvement in the slave trade (e.g. Amsterdam co-owned Suriname) and there are clear references to the iniquities to which slaves and plantation workers were subject by Dutch colonists. Later in the display we encounter archive footage of Surinamese immigrants being told in 1975 that they are not free to settle in Amsterdam, Utrecht, Rotterdam or The Hague because those cities were 'full' (see also Chapter 8, this volume). The connections between the two stories – of colonial subjugation and enslavement and postcolonial immigration – are implicit. Another video concerns the popular protests in the aftermath of the 2004 assassination of filmmaker Theo Van Gogh by an Islamic fundamentalist. The protests opposed the limitation of freedom of expression for which Amsterdam has been famous, but point to the limits of notions of tolerance and the exercise of personal freedoms within places where conflicting belief systems exist. Current social divisions and tensions are implied rather than made explicit. Another consequence of the colonial history of Amsterdam and its embodiment in material culture is that the protagonists of history are largely white Dutch, belying the fact that Amsterdam and its wealth and culture were constructed also by other populations (slaves, guestworkers, etc.) who are represented only

symbolically or numerically in the display. We visited the museum with a group of research participants with migrant backgrounds. In a room full of Golden Age portraits (Figure 1.5) one first-generation Turkish migrant commented ‘We are not here’. Of course, a basic understanding of the seventeenth-century market for portraiture in the Netherlands would explain this absence, but alternative representational strategies – perhaps provocatively interspersing images of Others from the seventeenth century and later times – might be developed to counter the sense of imbalance.

[Insert Figure 1.5 here – portrait]

Figure 1.5 *Amsterdam DNA*, Amsterdam Museum

Source: Photograph by Whitehead, courtesy of Amsterdam Museum.

A risk run by the very strong conferral of place identity in genetic terms (‘Amsterdam DNA’) is that of essentializing and indeed naturalizing and homogenizing the characteristics of Amsterdammers, although through other means an invitation is made to all visitors to identify as Amsterdammers: a system of scanning barcodes and charting personal preferences for one DNA strand or another. This generous attempt to ‘share’ place identity as an inclusive one forms an unusual strategy to reconcile the exclusive particularity of specific place–people–culture relations with an egalitarian sense of welcome; that anyone is a potential Amsterdammer if she or he identifies with or assumes certain traits (this, of course, is not strictly compatible with the genetic metaphor of DNA ...).

[Insert Figure 1.6 here – landscape]

Figure 1.6 *Migrant Stories*, Amsterdam Museum

Source: Photograph by Whitehead, courtesy of Amsterdam Museum.

The *Migrant Stories* display, opened in 1999, focuses on 13 individuals, each of whom are represented by photographs and a small number of personal possessions (Figure 1.6). A number of different types of migration are referenced, from labour migrants (e.g. Italian ice cream vendors, domestic workers and the Moroccan wife of a guestworker who became an entrepreneur), to illegal migration and asylum seeking, and internal migration. Four of the

stories are about people who moved within the Netherlands, such as the story of Karen and Peter Angenent (born 1950 and 1951), who moved from Amsterdam to the new town of Almere when their children were born; when their children grew up the couple moved back to Amsterdam taking with them a garden gnome, perhaps as a souvenir of garden-city life. Tina Alamu (born 1954), an asylum seeker from Ghana who later became a pillar of the community, visiting survivors of the 1992 Bijlmer disaster (when a plane flew into a block of flats), volunteering and eventually working at a crèche specially established for mothers of an ethnic minority background with irregular working hours, is represented by her Bible, the text of which is much highlighted and underlined, representing the Christian faith that inspired her good works. Arthur Parisius (1912–63) was a Surinamese stowaway who became a celebrated jazz musician in Amsterdam, marrying an Amsterdammer (five of the 13 stories reference intermarriage between immigrants and Netherlandish people) and developed a musical style that incorporated Surinamese rhythms, referenced in the musical score on display alongside the cap of his saxophone’s mouthpiece. Hybrid forms are also embodied in the objects provided by artist Ni Haifeng (born 1964) (Figure 1.7):

A constant process of translation’ is how artist Ni Haifeng sees living in a foreign country. Originally from China, he has lived with his Dutch wife since 1995. Their daughter was born here. For Ni Haifeng, Amsterdam is a beautiful and relaxed city, where history still remains visible.

Since 2006, municipalities are required to hold ceremonies for people who adopt Dutch nationality. Amsterdam commissioned Ni Haifeng to design a naturalisation gift. He used materials that typified Amsterdam’s environment – bricks, wood, potatoes – to map out his new home town. He sent the work in pieces to Jingdezhen, China’s porcelain centre, and it came back cast as decorated porcelain objects.

The gift symbolises the historical marriage of the Dutch with the migrants who have settled here, and recalls the Golden Age in which Amsterdam first introduced imported Chinese porcelain to the European market. (Amsterdam Museum *Migrant Stories* label)

[Insert Figure 1.7 here – landscape]

Figure 1.7 Naturalization gifts designed by Ni Haifeng, *Migrant Stories*, Amsterdam Museum

Source: Photograph by Whitehead, courtesy of Amsterdam Museum.

With its emphasis on generative intermixing (in life as in art) the interpretation of Ni Haifeng's gifts references the physical and visual characteristics of places (of origin and destination, of memory and commerce), their histories, traditions, cultures, their interconnections and the potential or the desire for multiple belongings. This is a complex identity object because of its relation to multiple places and histories (including the artist's own) and its function as a commemoration of other people's 'naturalization' (itself an problematic metaphor), whereby it becomes a general symbol of the immigrant experience of coming to belong (the suggestion is that elective belonging is always possible) and 'adopting' a new nationality.

Taken as a group of representations about migration, the 'migrant stories' and the identity objects on display – tools of work, emblems, souvenirs, documents and dear possessions – trace a particular 'mapping' of the migrant experience, just as Ni Haifeng is said to have 'mapped out' Amsterdam through physical means. The display maps displacement from 'home' (this is not differentiated – home is generic and can be somewhere else in the world or somewhere else in the Netherlands – no extra weight is given to either, nor to different ethnicities) and people's movement to and existence within Amsterdam. The displacement is negotiated through work, enterprise, and (often) intermarriage, leading to wealth, civic virtue, belonging and adoption. Some traces of 'home' culture are carried through (e.g. Italian ice cream, Surinamese rhythms) but the general narrative suggested by the migrant stories is one of positive assimilation in and contribution to society. Diversity and equality are tacitly celebrated through the selection of people and their stories of success or virtue. Assimilation is not really accounted for but appears to happen naturally.

This example shows how identity objects can be constituted and used to tell impressive stories about place, people's relation to place, and migration in particular, perhaps because such material objects embody the means of people's survival and so speak closely to experiences of travel, orientation and welfare; in some cases they are also objects that have survived the

upheavals of migration and take on the particular power to represent continuity. At the same time, the display presents a view of migration as something achieved relatively easily and of benefit both to the migrant and to the host. The difficulties, disadvantages and prejudices which migrants may experience go largely unnoticed here, and this silence is characteristic of many city museum representations of migration. However, alternative views of the personal costs of migration and displacement are to be found in museums that take migration as a key focus and those that represent borderlands and the experience of inhabiting them. We turn now to these museums.

Bordered Places, Departures, Crossings, Arrivals

‘Place’ and ‘places’ are frequently defined, determined and delineated by their boundaries, or borders. In terms of thinking about a place, what is within, and what is beyond the borders of that place tend to be the starting point for understanding the specificities of that place – the questions that define a place and its identity:

- Where is it (in relation to other places bordering it)?
- Who does it belong to (what nation is it part of)?
- Who belongs to it or who lives there (which people(s) belong or live there)?
- What does it look like (the geography, urban and rural environments, the population)?
- What does it sound like (the language(s) spoken, the politics articulated there)?
- What has happened there (constitutional moments)?
- What is important there (what is valued, what is given space and time)?
- How does it present itself to visitors or outsiders (through museums, heritage, tourism, politics, institutions)?
- What is it like to live there (costs, quality of life, equality, representation, culture)?

The theme of bordered places encompasses a wide range of historical, geographic and political issues from contemporary economic migration (both to and within the EU) to historical forced migrations as a consequence of war. Recent European history exemplifies the notion of the border as a changing phenomenon, rather than a fixed point within space and time – the

twentieth and twenty-first centuries have seen the extremes of impermeable closed borders during the Cold War and current ‘borderlessness’ within the Schengen region. The ways in which the places and people(s), cultures and histories affected by such movements are presented in museums is varied and complex, not merely as a result of the variety of specific cases involved, but also due to ongoing political and social sensitivities. However, these very sensitivities as well as the contemporary resonance of historical topics make the theme of peoples, borders, movements very relevant to a wide range of museums today. Gothenberg’s Museum of World Cultures 2012 *Destination X* exhibition includes the text panel below, which sums up some of the different experiences of moving across borders:

Where are you going?

When we travel we cross different borders.

The borders that exist today are not ancient or absolute and eternal.

Those who have resources and opportunity travel around the world with curiosity to discover the existing and unknown.

But when refugees come to a new country often the meeting with the unknown is not so appealing.

As many borders (within Schengen Europe at least) have changed from being hard physical boundaries to become more fluid and open, potentially acting as meeting points for people from either side, the question of how the shared histories of division, separation and migration of people across borders (whose routes may have changed over time) can be addressed, has become ever more pressing. In addition, the political rhetoric surrounding both legal and illegal immigration tends towards the extreme, with media headlines reporting the apparent dangers of an imminent or pre-existing ‘flood of immigrants’ to the receiving nation (a small selection of examples includes: Gezer (2012), Barrett (2013), Evans (2013) and Petre and Walters (2013)). The acknowledgement that migration and migrants are not only an intrinsic part of human history but also of contemporary life in a globalized world has not always been as forthcoming politically as it has been at a grassroots level. Germany is a key example of this where the phrase ‘Deutschland kein Einwanderungsland’ (Germany is no immigration country), coined by Helmut Kohl in the 1980s, has only very recently been turned around into

‘Deutschland ist ein Einwanderungsland’ (Germany is an immigration country), with the relatively recent changes to the German immigration laws (Kohlmann 2005). Where border change, as well as population change, has occurred, for example the displacement of German populations from east of the Oder-Neisse line following the Second World War, the cultural heritage, traditions and identities of these people, and these places, have also undergone extreme disruption. The way in which societies have absorbed and reflected such changes within their cultures is a frequent theme within different museum presentations, ranging from national museums, city museums, transport museums, museums of migration, folk museums, regional museums to small local museums. Assmann and Czaplicka point out that:

through its cultural heritage a society becomes visible to itself and to others. Which past becomes evident in that heritage and which values emerge in this identificatory appropriation tells us much about the constitution and tendencies of a society. (1995: 133)

In today’s European society (or societies) where individuals are just as likely to identify with a regional or civic sense of belonging as much as (or more than) a national, or European one, the way in which the heritage and identities of cross-border regions and of migrants are managed, interpreted and understood is highly significant. This is heightened in museums which address changes in populations through migration, as this will often have created a disjunction between that heritage which remained in situ – tied to place – and the traditions, objects and memories which will have been carried with individuals on their journey of migration. At the same time, generational change and a changing sense of attachment to place (both the places of the past and the places of the present) will also have an impact on, and create new challenges for, the preservation, collection, display and interpretation of such heritage, objects, traditions and memories.

Where border and population change has been part of the history of a region, the idea of a long-gone ‘place’ – in other words a place which is characterized by the people who once lived there, their languages, traditions and memories – adds another layer to understandings of places and their significance in history and today. This creates a challenge for those responsible

for presenting such histories, people(s) and places, particularly where the subject is part of contemporary or recent political debate. Migration museums, which may tend towards more generic representations of migrants as a group with a shared 'migrant' identity, over and above their own individual identities, frequently side-step this issue by focusing more on the migrant as a person 'starting anew' in a new place, exploring (often through first-person representations) the trials and tribulations of coming to terms with an unfamiliar environment and one's own outsider status. While the stories may be individual, the experiences and themes are common and life in the countries of origin, including what 'push' factors impelled people to migrate, are often only lightly touched upon. A greater attention to this, alongside the hardships experienced by migrants in receiving states, might form a powerful means of engendering empathetic responses and acting upon prejudice, a theme that we will develop below.

Museums which are not obviously about migration, or even about border change, do still address these topics in so much as they form a part of a regional, national or European history, which falls within that museum's remit. So, for example, the Museum Europäischer Kulturen - Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Museum of European Cultures), or the Military History Museum in Dresden, both contain objects which are interpreted so as to arouse interest in the German history of displacement following the end of the Second World War, while putting this within the wider context of European ethnologies, and of forced migrations, respectively (Whitehead et al. 2012). The Jewish Museum Berlin is one example where the institution has expanded its remit beyond that of a historical presentation of a single group, to one with a social role in a contemporary multi-ethnic, multicultural society by developing an academy with a programme on migration and diversity. In doing this the museum is highlighting the contemporary resonance of German-Jewish history, in a world which is shaped by religious and cultural diversity: the main demographic group in the area in which the museum is sited is made up of Muslim people with Turkish origin. The imperative here is not to 'pigeon-hole' the past, but rather to maximize its potential transferability in addressing contemporary social concerns.

Detailed case study research was undertaken at the Schlesisches Museum zu Görlitz (Silesian Museum Görlitz), a museum which addresses the cultural history of Silesia (a region split by the post-Second World War border between Poland and Germany along the Oder-Neisse line). The German population of Silesia from east of the Oder-Neisse line were ‘transferred’ to the west in the early post-war years, while additional Polish communities were ‘resettled’ into the region from the former eastern regions of Poland (which became part of Soviet Russia to the east of the Curzon line). The original town of Görlitz was itself split into two by the new border along the River Neisse, with the western portions of the town of Görlitz on the German side, and the eastern portions of the town on the Polish side became Zgorzelec.

Museums such as the Silesian Museum in Görlitz, which not only focuses on the history and culture of a region where both the border and the population have undergone radical change, but sits within metres of the German–Polish border on the River Neisse, have a particularly important role to play. The museum’s director considers it not to be a museum of migration per se, although he acknowledges that forced migration (with the expulsion of Germans from Silesia) is a key theme. Rather, he sees it as a museum illustrating the cultural history of a singularly ‘European’ region: a region sitting at the crossroads of the cultures, influences and power plays between East and West, and also further back into history on the boundaries of North and South, between Protestant Prussia and Catholic Bohemia, within which Silesia was the bone of contention (Bauer, pers. comm., 2014). He sees the museum as an opportunity to illustrate the richness which emerged out the region’s border and trade route identity in the past, and to act as a bridge between populations in the present. As the introductory text panel in the museum says:

The traditions of Silesia are a communal heritage of Germans, Poles and Czechs. The museum searches for new ways into this historic cultural landscape and invites discussion on the history and future of Silesia.

(Translated from German by the authors)

We visited the museum with two groups of research participants, one German and one Polish, from Görlitz and Zgorzelec respectively. Although the museum organizes a number of activities

and events for both German and Polish speakers, the language barrier remains (at least for the German research participants, very few of whom spoke Polish) and while all the participants saw the research project itself as having great potential for bridge building, they did not necessarily feel it was apparent elsewhere within the museum despite them remarking on how careful the museum was to be objective, factual and fair.

[Insert Figure 1.8 here – landscape]

Figure 1.8 ‘Landscapes and Cities’ gallery, Schlesisches Museum zu Görlitz

Source: Photograph by Eckersley, courtesy of Schlesisches Museum zu Görlitz.

The Silesian Museum is divided into 17 rooms, each with its own thematic focus, along a broadly chronological thread. Within this the key themes of the museum’s presentation of Silesia are set out to the visitor in the first room, entitled ‘Landscapes and Cities’ (Figure 1.8):

- the river;
- the mountains;
- the romantic landscape;
- the metropolis of Breslau/Wrocław;
- the cities;
- the industrial districts;
- Görlitz and Silesian Upper Lusatia.

These themes are then developed further within subsequent rooms of the museum, although not always explicitly as they are embedded within the chronological cultural history. Both Polish and German research participants felt that these themes reflected their own sense of the significant identity places within Silesia. Interestingly the German research participants recalled particular places as part of stories told to them by older generations, or reflected on their own recent visits to certain places as tourists, while for the Polish participants many of the places were part of their everyday understanding of their own Polish identity.

Further into the museum, these themes are picked up most noticeably within room 16 – ‘From Empire to Republic’ – which contains a series of displays covering a huge range of

types of materials, from the ethnographic to the political and industrial history of the region. While some of the items found great resonance with the research participants in relation to their own memories of foods, dialects and traditions, the more overtly political items connected to the plebiscites within Upper Silesia on whether the population wished to be part of Poland or of Germany, did not provoke strong feelings in either group. The continuation of the question of German or Polish sovereignty within the last rooms of the museum, 'Silesia during National Socialism and the Second World War', and 'Downfall and New Beginnings', which covered the Nazi period and up to the setting of the border along the Oder-Neisse line, generated more in the way of an emotional response. However, it is interesting to note that for both groups, this was more one of general sorrow that such events could take place, causing so much pain to so many people (of all nationalities) rather than provoking any sense of 'us and them'. The museum staff have intentionally ended the museum's permanent exhibitions at the point that Silesia as a German region ceased to exist, seeing themselves as the custodians of the German Silesian past, and seeing museums within Poland as the rightful custodians of Silesia's culture and history since 1945. However, many of the research participants, and many other visitors, expressed the view that the museum is missing an opportunity for shining a more positive light on Silesia by not bringing the permanent exhibition up to the present. At the same time, the museum sees its temporary exhibitions, which are often curated in collaboration with museums in Poland or with the participation of diverse communities in Görlitz/Zgorzelec, as their way of addressing this apparent deficiency (Bauer, pers. comm., 2014; Pietsch, pers. comm., 2014). Recent exhibitions which have overtly responded to the populations' apparent need to explore the issues of migration intrinsic to the region and Görlitz's role as a border town include 'Life Routes into Uncertainty' on the migration history of Görlitz/Zgorzelec, and 'Silesia after 1945' exploring contemporary identities within Silesia. Other exhibitions, less obviously connected to Silesia's migration history, such as 'The Wood Carving School in Bad Warmbrunn – Past and Present', inevitably touch on the region's history of border and population change, as the total disruption experienced impacted on every aspect of life within Silesia.

The idea that, within contemporary Europe, a border, an often arbitrary line drawn on a map, can realistically be a boundary to the transfer of ideas, cultures and people is negated by the experience of Silesia, as only one example. Border regions frequently have an identity of their own, either due to a long history of cross-border relations, or a shared language, geography, culture or history (even where this shared history is one of conflict and division). The border therefore becomes less of a boundary demarcating the edges of a place, and more of a shared space within which there is the potential for common identities to develop.

Some museums seek to position visitors in proximity to Others. In ‘talking heads’ videos at the Memoria e Migrazioni museum in Genoa, the horrific stories told by illegal immigrants of their attempts to cross countries and borders and to arrive to safety, invite empathetic responses that may reduce the resentment felt by some towards immigrants. The Museo Paolo Cresci per la Storia dell’Emigrazione in Lucca draws parallels between the hardships experienced by Italian emigrants in the early twentieth century and those experienced by immigrants to Italy in the present, appealing for an empathetic response from Italian visitors (see also Chapter 11 in this volume). This can be situated as part of a new valorization of the power of the museum to prompt empathy and to create understandings of difference, particularly evident in Australian contexts and burgeoning in Europe (see Witcomb 2013; Schorch 2014).

But, while based on egalitarianism, the organization of museum representations to prompt empathy in visitors is necessarily a partisan act and the moral and political choices made by the museum in appealing for empathetic responses need to be made clear to audiences: with whom are (which) audiences invited to empathize, and why? At present many museums invite audiences to empathize with the disadvantaged migrant, who comes to *stand* for migration. Visitors are not often invited to engage with other types of individuals who, in whatever direct or indirect way, can be seen to contribute to the disadvantage that some migrants endure. The complexities of labour or forced migration – the global economic, social and political forces, the environmental factors and actors that are involved – are hidden from view in favour of appeals to empathy prompted by affecting stories of the personal suffering

borne by individual migrants. We may ask, what would be revealed by, and how would audiences respond to, the stories of those who have privileged positions within power relations: the super-rich individual with houses in the most expensive areas of London (Chapter 2, this volume); the sweatshop owner or the international CEO; the people trafficker; or the professional Far Right politician? To be clear, we do not at all suggest that museums should invite visitors to feel empathy for such individuals. Rather, the task is to render the complexity of migration more comprehensively, to develop an interplay between affective response (empathy for the migrant, but maybe also quite different feelings about other figures involved in migration) and a more ‘distanced’ contextual understanding of the relationality of migration and migrant experiences that cannot be reduced to the trope of the migrant’s hardship story. Below, in the final part of this chapter, we will return to this issue of the balancing of ‘distanced’ and empathetic perspectives.

Part 3. Museums, Place Identities and Strategies for Social Action

So far, this chapter has explored different place–people–culture representations in European museums in order to understand how such representations relate to, and construct, identities. We would argue that place is an ineradicable force in museums even where it appears to be a background, and that a valorization of its core significance can enable particular perspectives and possibilities for practice. Some of the attractive properties of place as an organizational force within museums are that it forms both a literal ground for the geo-temporal contextualization of objects and events, and thus for making sense of history, and a modality of representation of people that is an alternative to ethnic or sub-cultural categorizations. Place, in this sense, can seem like a unifying force, for we all inhabit it. Of course, the experiences and conditions of being in place differ vastly for different groups, and place as a bordered quantity necessarily involves an inside–outside dynamic that can generate exclusive or defensive identifications. So, place is not a force for good in the sense that it erases difference. It does not: but part of its power is that it necessarily localizes differences, allowing for the possibility to confront them in the museum and to assemble their expressions, both material and immaterial. In this final part of the chapter we explore this possibility.

We also argue that museums that represent aspects of contemporary society (such as diversity) necessarily take implicit political and moral positions – often (at least in many countries in Western Europe) a liberal one that seeks to promote mutual respect and solidarity between groups. These positions should be acknowledged, not just in mission statements but in displays. However, this acknowledgement should not come at the cost of removing from view other, contrasting, positions. As authors of this argument we should state that we support any museum position that explicitly promotes egalitarian ideals. But we also recognize that there are other political or moral orders with social purchase and that to silence them is to create a fictional representation of coherent, peaceful social relations characterized by consensus, idealized cultural sharings and shared belongings. While this fiction may be comforting for many, it is not representative of actual social divisions. At the same time we acknowledge the dangers of ‘giving platform’ to ideological viewpoints that are not congenial to liberal, egalitarian or cosmopolitan values, but we suggest that through *historicizing them contextually in relation to place* they can be made into objects of distanced scrutiny. Such scrutiny, we contend, can promote more comprehensive understandings of social complexities relating to contentions around place, migration and belonging.

Historicizing Antagonisms

Drawing upon the work of Chantal Mouffe and her account of the political, or the antagonistic dimension inherent to human societies (Laclau and Mouffe 2001; Mouffe 2005a, 2005b, 2013; see also Pozzi 2013), we suggest that place representations in museums can be the arena for the historicization of antagonistic positions past and present. This is because place representations can form a ready ground for the kind of contextualization of differences and tensions that allows visitors to reflect on the histories and contingencies of places and identities. This opens up the possibility that there are multiple experiences of place, place identities and attachments pertaining to one location, and that they can be in tension with one another (see also Trinca 2007: 98). Further to this, we suggest that museums – as forms of cartography – have the technological potential to chart or map the different political orders and antagonisms in relation to materialities, to place and to people’s lived experiences.

Mouffe's political theory (acknowledging also her theorizations with Ernesto Laclau (2001)) is premised on the notion of 'radical negativity' that 'impedes the full totalization of society and forecloses the possibility of a society beyond division and power', meaning that there is no 'final ground' to be reached through idealist pursuit of the (liberal) 'rationalist belief in the availability of a universal consensus based on reason' (Mouffe 2013: 1–3). We see the ineradicable antagonism that is ever-present in society as manifest in irreconcilable cultural differences and unrealizable ethical-cultural positions. For example, the previously mentioned displays at the Amsterdam Museum relating to the murder of Theo Van Gogh, seen within the theme of 'Freedom of Thought', illustrate the inevitable breakdown of the liberal discourse of solidarity-in-diversity and concomitant notions of tolerance (i.e. how can we tolerate those who do not tolerate us?). This reintroduces an 'us/them' or 'us/those' identity dynamic that was clearly in evidence during the ensuing protest in Dam Square in 2004, in part a protest against challenges to the political order that champions freedom of expression (or at least the liberal version of freedom of expression), such as forms of fundamentalism. As Mouffe explains:

Every order is the temporary and precarious articulation of practices. Things could always be otherwise and every order is predicated on the exclusion of other possibilities. Any order is always the expression of a particular configuration of power relations. What is at a given moment accepted as the 'natural' order, jointly with the common sense that accompanies it, is the result of sedimented hegemonic practices. It is never the manifestation of a deeper objectivity that is exterior to the practices that brought it into being. Every order is therefore susceptible to being challenged by counter-hegemonic practices that attempt to disarticulate it in an effort to install another form of hegemony. (2013: 2)

In this sense, one educative mission of the museum could be the denaturalization of political orders, not necessarily in terms of *proposing* alternatives, but rather of opening up vistas onto the *possibility* of alternatives (see also Mason 2012). This need not entail changing people's minds, for as Mouffe explains, no order is 'natural' and therefore ultimately 'better' than others in an absolute sense. This may seem at first an amoral viewpoint, foreclosing moral arbitration.

But as we will see this is not so: it is based upon a notion that antagonisms should be acknowledged and that historicized representation is a way to do this which allows both an immediate relevance (a here-and-now-ness) and a sense of distance sufficient to allow engagement with difficult issues on the part of groups who are differently affected by them in the present, even if they inhabit the same places.

Belonging and Non-Belonging

When belonging is brought into relation with the contingency of places and place identities it too can be denaturalized (Stråth 2008: 24) and particular belongings historicized. In Jones and Krzyżanowski's formulation of the development of belonging they note a

mechanism in which negative information is rejected and positive experiences and views are aggregated so as to build up only positive information on the object of one's belonging while excluding and deleting negative information and experiences which would undermine or distort this positive image. (2008/11: 47)

We propose that the museum may provide a force for the destabilization of this mechanism, as perhaps the safest space for remembering the 'negative' dimensions of belonging and rendering their historical complexities. It is not inconceivable that such destabilization may have effects on the constitution of socio-political groups, on value systems and on the construction of new ones that call into question some social divisions. This is particularly significant because place identities can be proposed or developed as an elective form of belonging (Savage et al. 2004) that is potentially more unifying than ethnic identifiers, but this only works if the places themselves are uncontested, and if habitation, citizenship and welfare come easily to all. This is clearly not the case in our bordered nation states and in bordered supranational entities like the EU.

This 'reality check' – for example understanding and representing the real circumstances facing migrants – is a potential key function of museums, capable of mapping complexities such as: the relations between historic migrations and contemporary ones; between migration and the historical-to-contemporary global circumstances that power it; between migrations, iniquity, social division, unequal power relations and ideals of

multicultural society; and between politics and the day-to-day lived experience of migrants as a heterogeneous group (so heterogeneous that in some places it comprises refugees and the transnational super-rich). At the time and place of writing (the UK, just after the opening up of borders to economic migrants from Bulgaria and Romania) there is a striking mismatch between some museums' positive valorization of immigration as a force for economic, cultural and social enrichment on the one hand, and the political discourse and proposed legislation around limiting opportunities for immigrants on the other. Alongside this some news media outlets engage in a 'construction of fear' of immigrants connected to anxieties about the consequences of globalization for securities, social status and identity (Delanty et al. 2008: 11–14; Wodak forthcoming). And this is not to mention other, perhaps connected forms of prejudice that many immigrants experience. As we have suggested, museums that are attentive to the present, or to contemporary legacies of histories of movement, migration and contact, should not be reduced to the status of purveyor of (fictional) happy endings. We contend that it is important to open up such contradictions and, by historicizing them and the antagonisms and conflicting accounts they embody, to render them objects of historical scrutiny, thus potentializing an exit from the entrenchments of defensiveness or from reductive senses of belonging.

Alongside this, as discussed in Part 2 of this chapter, cosmopolitan ideas of belonging can be potentialized by presenting historical stories of places as contingent developments, as part social constructs and as spaces shaped over time by different political orders, by connections with multiple other places and by the multiple peoples with diverse origins who may have inhabited them. But one risk of this approach is that the denaturalization of places as entities, of political orders, moralities and even notions of indigeneity, may mean that, for some, identities are destabilized uncomfortably, leading to retrenchment and defensiveness (see Chapter 6, this volume). While both theorists and museum practitioners may seek to emphasize the fluid nature of identity and the constructed nature of place, within individuals' daily lives the desire to hold a fixed understanding of place may provide a sense of pride, stability and coherence in their identity narratives. This may run counter to the 'connective' and

transgeographical work encountered in museums that have taken a global history approach, as discussed earlier in this chapter. This work enables multi-geographical perspectives that constructively open up, problematize and render the complexity of place identities, identity objects and place histories, potentially contributing to the development of the kind of ‘extroverted’ and ‘progressive’ sense of place championed by Doreen Massey (1994: 154; see also Trinca 2007: 98–9). But, as Massey herself points out, ‘there is the need to face up to – rather than simply deny – people’s need for attachment of some sort, whether through place or anything else’ (1994: 151). In addition, visitors may resist museum interpretations that stress the connections and commonalities *between* places, for such ideas may undermine the feelings of pride and comfort visitors experience when focusing on the unique and distinctive aspects of place in the face of globalization and perceived homogenization.

One of the ‘productive dilemmas of history’ identified by Peter Aronsson lies in a functional dichotomy between critique and confirmation. Is history’s overall purpose ‘to create a stable context of identity and stability’, or does its value lie in the ability to criticize and historicize ‘all *a priori* considerations’ (2011: 36)? In this sense we recognize that identities may well be destabilized by critique, but we also argue that an uncritical confirmation of identities is not a responsible mode of representation for any museum seeking to address social realities where division and antagonisms figure. Meanwhile, the projects of denaturalizing *and* celebrating places and place identities are always going to be in tension but are not necessarily entirely incompatible, and many museum professionals are so attuned to local contexts and power relations as to be able to negotiate this balance, as we saw in the case of the National Museum of Scotland where place identities were presented in a broadly celebratory fashion, but without masking internal contradictions and negative aspects. Despite the risks of the kind of historicization we are advocating – one which identifies and contextualizes antagonisms, identity constructs, different moral and ideological positions and the tensions between different political orders – the careful deconstruction of place identities has something important to offer to the politics of negotiating cultural differences in a globalized world where antagonistic ‘worldviews’ cannot be willed away and often find violent expression.

Moral Arbitration and Difference

While museums may function as a space for mapping historical and contemporary antagonisms they cannot form a ‘neutral’ catalogue of possible political orders; their personnel should reflect on the prevailing hegemonic order and the museum’s own functioning in relation to it. (It is to be hoped that while acknowledging their own political functioning, museums can attain sufficient power and relative autonomy to resist pressures to support dominant party politics (Mason 2013: 58–61), although this is not always the case.) Some moral arbitration is inevitable in museums. There are a number of possible responses to this. One is to mask the arbitration as the explanation of truth, leading to propagandist representations. Another is to historicize this arbitration as one of many positions, but to own up to it. A third is to demonstrate different arbitrations, pulling each one into question.

As Richard Sandell, arguing for liberal museum activism, explains, ‘all museums embody sets of values which communicate a particular vision of society but this tendentiousness is very often denied by exhibition makers, both explicitly and implicitly, and rarely openly acknowledged by visitors’. He proceeds, ‘practitioners who fervently maintain that museums are inappropriate settings for initiatives purposefully designed to promote and engender support for egalitarian social values are very often content to promote other sets of values which they themselves take as axiomatic’ (Sandell 2007: 177). However, we must recognize that for some museum professionals egalitarianism as a good is itself axiomatic, and even if this is an ethical position of significant appeal to many (including ourselves, as stated) it is also not ‘natural’ in Mouffe’s sense, and nor are other axiomatic standards such as ‘human rights’ (Panikkar 1982; Mouffe 2013: 30–32); rather, they are cultural. Mouffe reminds us that because there is no final ground of ideal consensus, ‘proper political questions always involve decisions that require making a choice between conflicting alternatives’ (2013: 3).

Are museums the places to make such decisions? Many within the sector still adhere to the belief identified by Robert Sullivan (1985) that museums ‘can and should be non-moral and value-neutral in their behaviours’ (cited in Sandell 2007: 195), and that decisions about which political order to uphold are best left to professional politicians and parliamentary

institutions. But as part of the apparatus which, through representation, constructs social and political orders and values (alongside others, such as political speeches or news media), it is naïve to deny the agency of the museum or the inevitability of a partisan bearing. And, from our interviews, we observe that while some museum professionals insist on a model of the museum as objective and accurate ‘reflection’ of society, others actively embrace a model of museum as constructive agency, capable not merely of reflecting, but of informing political and social realities, for example by promoting the idea that immigration is good for society (Ross, pers. comm., 2013).

These issues concern the public mission of the museum. What does it mean to be a public museum today? In recent times we might say that the rise of identity politics in the museum has led to a prioritization of museums being *of* the public (in the sense of being representative of a given identity-based group) and there has been far less talk of being *for* the public. This is understandable, because being *for* the public is a position that can in some cases function as a cover for the promotion of hegemonic interests and because it calls paternalism to mind. However, one important mission of the contemporary museum is to be a space for public-formation – a space where civil society and an idea of ‘the public’ is enacted through the coming together – sometimes in conflict, sometimes in exchange, sometimes consensus – of different points of view and different vested interests.

How then can museum practitioners exercise professional agency responsibly and reflexively, in a context where irreconcilable difference and dissent is inevitable, and how might a focus on place form a platform for this?

Perhaps the most common proposition in this regard is for museums to work with communities in co-productive modes to develop polyvocal (multivoiced) representations (Mason et al. 2012). The internal variety of these overcomes the monolithic adherence to the hegemonic political order of which the museum is a part, also obviating the liabilities of the museum speaking for others. In this respect there is considerable value in a polyvocal approach. At the same time, some problems associated with this are that:

1. The museum inevitably marshalls and orchestrates the plurality of voices, meaning that it constructs and orders a representation of plurality rather than plurality per se – it is in a sense a commissioned plurality, and hence does not offer a coherent means of overcoming the ‘constructive’ model in favour of the ‘reflective’ one, which is arguably impossible within the technological structure of the museum.
2. Society is so plural and there are so many competing political orders, themselves perpetually reactive, multiplying and in construction, that the museum can never claim representational completeness.
3. As Mathew Trinca points out in his discussion of the National Museum of Australia, ‘using “multiple voices” to denote a plural social realm can mask the actual relations of power in any given historical moment ... [for if] different ethnic or class perspectives of the past are simply presented alongside each other, they may mistakenly appear to have the same valency or historical weight’ (2007: 98). This runs the risk of presenting a utopian fiction of seamless egalitarianism as truth.
4. Some of the groups whose voices might be heard in the museum are routinely censured because of the challenges they pose to Western civil societies and their ethical-political values. Within this category we include anti-egalitarian, anti-democratic voices, racist, sexist and homophobic ones, those who incite people to violence and hate (insofar as this is legally defined) and those who cast doubt on or deny majority-accepted historical accounts of foundational constitution moments for progressive ethical identities, notably the Holocaust. Including such voices runs the significant practical risks of ‘giving platform’, creating public outrage and media storms, breaking the law and fomenting rather than overcoming social division.

These then are the risks and limits associated with polyvocality and in particular the co-production of museum representations by professionals and social groupings of one kind or another. This does not mean abandoning co-production as a modality for making representations, but it is necessary to be sensitive to its limits, in particular in relation to the

museum's agency within the arena of social division. Another strategy for organizing representations of contemporary social relations is the calibration of distance and proximity as modes of visitor apprehension and comprehension. We turn to this now.

Distance and Proximity

One striking observation from our fieldwork visiting history museums across Europe is that it is of course possible to present dissenting voices whose values and messages are unpalatable to contemporary 'progressive' liberal society, but often only where those voices are historical. Indeed a kind of historical timelag appears to exist, after which things (seem to) become safe to talk about, perhaps because they achieve 'a relatively "settled" narrative or overarching consensus' (Sandell 2007: 184), associated with a sense of 'distance' – a tellingly spatial metaphor. It is perfectly possible and indeed not unusual to present unpalatable views. For example, consider the displays about colonial racism in the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam or the Royal Museum of Central Africa in Tervuren, near Brussels, or the many museums in Germany that explore Nazi ideology. These unpalatable views are often presented within the affective politics of disavowal, shame and regret in a 'never-again' discourse belying the existence of contemporary dissonances such as racisms and Far Right ideologies usually ignored by the museum.

While the timelag itself may have key socio-psychological importance, we also speculate that merely the act of *historicizing* something that is happening now can allow for it to be recognized and brought out. If we understand history not as 'what happened' in the 'past' but as a *knowledge* – a mode of apprehending, accounting for and representing phenomena – then it follows that even very recent occurrences and political orders that are not 'over' (for is anything really ever over?), and that strongly and obviously inform present circumstances, can also be historicized. We contend that just as there is no final ground for political consensus, so there is no absolutely safe ground for the management of histories that still have currency in the present, but the epistemological and representational tools involved in historicizing phenomena may themselves go some way towards bringing about some sense of the 'distance' required for us to confront them without neutralizing or draining them of their political and

affective currency. To be sure, this requires the figure of a curator to do the historicizing, so there is still an inevitable act of cultural authority on the part of the museum. But this act does enable museums to represent profound dissent and division in a way that polyvocal co-production cannot. Division, dissent and difference, even when profoundly important in the present, persistent and ‘happening now’, can be explained historically.

At the same time, as Mark Salber Phillips has noted, distance is constructed, for ‘every history has to take on the task of positioning its audience in relation to a past’ (2006: 89), or, to adapt his argument to our purposes, to the present as well. Salber Phillips relates this to the evocative techniques of contemporary museums in providing a sense of the past that is socially comprehensive and visually immediate, for example through the inclusion of music, voices, video and immersive environments that aim to engage multiple senses, in contrast to the classificatory mode of exposition typical of old-fashioned displays where visitors are literally kept at a distance from the past by exhibition furniture. Newer, more engaging forms of display reduce ‘the separation between viewer and object’ and invite us ‘to imagine the past as a field of experience rather than as an object of study’ (2006). This is a powerful means of provoking affective and potentially empathetic responses. By *reducing* distance between visitors and historical representations, or even immersing visitors within them, museums may bring about the possibility for people to identify with or comprehend particular social realities, such as a migrant experience, or the worldview of a slave, a colonist or a slave-owner (as at the Maritime Museum in Amsterdam, for example, where televised, life-size first-person characters appear to address visitors directly and tell their stories after being triggered by movement sensors). Indeed, the evocative power of the kinds of place–time representations discussed in Part 1 of this chapter inevitably involve negotiations between proximate and distanced positions of some kind. The identity place – evoked, modelled, mapped or represented in video or blown-up photograph; the constitution moment – reconstructed immersively or marked on a timeline; and the identity object as a connector to places, journeys and other people’s experiences and identities ... all of these, in their treatment within display, offer resources for the technical control of distant and proximate positions allowing for interplay between affective and

‘detached’ responses. The task for museums is to organize for visitors the shift between them as two different registers of engagement: to ‘locate possibilities for making past moments close and pressing – in order to intensify, for example, the emotional or political impact of an event’ as well as to create the possibility for ‘stepping back’ (Phillips 2006: 96). We may thus be able to step, empathetically and momentarily, into the shoes of the migrant, and to apprehend cultures of racism as a thing made strange, distanced from us by a glass case.

Imagine, for example, the case of a Western European country in which, while public attitudes to immigrants are plural, racisms and racist organisations exist, some self-identifying autochthons see immigration as broadly undesirable and some feel that they are negatively affected by influxes of immigrants, for example believing that immigrants take their jobs or impose unacceptable customs and cultural practices. Now imagine how a museum in such a country might historicize the stories of those who migrate there because of risk of harm or poverty in their ‘home’ countries. This historicization would examine not just the social conditions of the migrants’ countries of origin, but also how those conditions came about, and how this can be understood in the context of historical global orders. It would historicize the hardships of their migratory journeys, the very existence of the borders that they seek to cross and the struggle to stay alive and flourish. In this way, a display might effect an interplay between, on the one hand, a sense of ‘distance’ liable to incur reflective, contextual understandings of migrations as complex phenomena and, on the other, affective responses such as empathy. Otherwise, the account might centre on the receiving state, for example by historicizing: the technical practices of reception (e.g. detention, granting or denying asylum, etc.); the existence and nature of racisms and bureaucratic and legal obstacles to which migrants are subject; the problems of citizenship; and the historical reasons for some people’s resistance to and intolerance towards migrants as well as the reasons why other people celebrate multiculturalism and diversity.

Final Thoughts

Our contention in this chapter is that a focus on place forms the ground for the historical contextualization of objects, events and beliefs. This contextualization is important in

explaining past and present phenomena that may be socially divisive, such as racisms. Through engagement with place, museums can localize social differences and tensions, allowing for the possibility to confront them constructively. Place can be a starting point for questioning the cultural assumptions that come to be naturalized within them. While a focus on place may suggest insularity, in fact the stories that identity objects can tell may prompt understanding of relationships between places, opening up multi-geographical perspectives that constructively open up, problematize and render the complexity of place identities and histories.

At the same time, the cultural specificity of places (be they nations, regions, cities or neighbourhoods) and the multiplicity of experiences of individual places means that there will always be multiple identities and attachments. Some of these will inevitably be in conflict or reveal unequal power relations, in particular in multicultural contexts where some immigrants are subject to structural disadvantages. It is not the role of museums to eradicate or harmonize these differences. However, they can contribute to greater social awareness through their power to prompt empathetic responses and historical understandings on the part of those who feel that their lifestyle or beliefs are threatened by influxes of people. A museum focus on place is also an important tool in developing the cultural and historical understandings of people from elsewhere. Recognizing and representing some of the many cultures and identities in a place, including relatively newly incorporated ones, is a useful means of creating progressive senses of belonging. We make a case for making a case for a renewed sense of the museum as a vital space for public discourse and formation around such important topics, and offer the following starting points as translations into practice of our arguments, and for further deliberations:

- Museums should acknowledge their potential to construct social values and should be clear about their institutional political positions; this may bring about the need for more organized and inclusive discussions between museum professionals within institutions about political standpoints and how to represent them to visitors.
- While acknowledging the political position taken by the museum, oppositional voices should not be ignored and the debates and antagonisms themselves can become part of the museum's representation.

- Museums should explore contemporary social differences and tensions by contextualizing them historically within place.
- Museums can orchestrate the interplay of distance and proximity in order to create the possibility of visitor experiences which blend historical understanding of phenomena (including contemporary ones) and affective engagements (including empathetic ones).
- Museums should consider the balance between addressing problematic issues and appealing to audiences who seek ‘positive’ visitor experiences; privileging the latter can potentially alienate local migrant communities.
- Engagement with migrant communities and groups is desirable, but it is not possible to be comprehensive in this regard; museums should recognize the limits of polyvocal co-production as a means of representing diversity and identities.
- As a counter to xenophobic attitudes, museums can present migration as a constant in human history while exploring how the circumstances, legalities and cultures of migration have been subject to change.
- Museums can integrate migration into broader historical narratives or isolate it as a topic in its own right; each of these choices has political ramifications either in subsuming the importance of migration or setting it apart.

This chapter has presented a number of theoretical and conceptual resources for understanding the relationships between place and identity in the museum. Representing these relationships involves exploiting the museum’s technological nature as a spatialized representation of knowledge – a map of sorts – through which history, place and movement from, through and to place, discourse, experience and materiality can be charted in relation to one another, creating resources for questioning and remaking identities and for confronting antagonisms. Attending to place is necessarily to attend to situated meanings, contingencies, contexts, histories and time-specificity, and this explanatory work of locating objects in time and place is of

importance in denaturalizing and de-universalizing them but also in representing the political dimension of existence and cultural production.

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